



THERAPY NOOK



Activities & Therapy

Answers

For child, family, therapist, and teacher



Welcome to *Therapy Nook*.

In this issue, you will find a heartwarming and touching interview with Amy Julia Becker, author of *A Good and Perfect Gift*, some creative and fine motor friendly Valentine's Day crafts, and an article by Dr. Mike, a TTTinc Physical Therapist, on how to keep your kids physically active while stuck inside during the cold, snowy season. Don't forget, our March of Dimes Fundraising event, *Networking For A Cause*, is on Thursday, March 22nd at 6pm at Kairo Kafe located at 49 Bayard Street in New Brunswick, New Jersey. For more information, visit the March of Dimes Event Calendar at:

http://www.marchofdimes.com/newjersey/5868_29615.asp

Valentine's Day: Creative, Fine Motor Fun!

Valentine's Day spirit is in the air! This year, celebrate with your children by involving them in some creative art activities including texture, color, and fun!

- Heart Rubbings: Cut heart shapes out of a bunch of different textures (i.e. sandpaper, doilies, cardboard, textured scrap booking paper). Tape the hearts to a flat surface in a fun design and then tape a piece of plain paper over top. Have the child rub crayons (using the side of the crayon) over the textures.
- Feather Fun: give the child pink, red, and white



paint and a feather to use as a "paintbrush" for each. Have the child paint a picture with the feathers and Valentine's Day colors.

- Cotton Ball Heart: Using a piece of pink or red paper, draw a rather large heart. In the heart, place glue. Have the child fill in the heart with cotton balls to create a fun and fluffy Valentine's Day creation!

Use these activities to get children in the spirit of Valentine's Day and to introduce them to new textures.

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What's Coming Up!

- Social Skills Groups are starting soon! Call our office to register now! Space is limited!
- LOOK for us! Tiny Tots Therapy Inc. and Therapy Nook LLC will be attending the following events!
 - NJPTA Conference, 3/23 - 3/24
 - NJ Kids Expo, 4/21 - 4/22
 - March For Babies Walk, 4/29
 - AOTA Conference, 4/26 - 4/28
- SAVE THE DATE!: March 22nd at 6pm, join us for Networking For A Cause, an event benefitting the March of Dimes! Make new professionally contacts, and enjoy some delicious food! Visit our website for more info!

Visit our website at:

www.tinytotstherapyinc.com

*"Transforming Lives...
One Child & Family at a Time"*

Tips & Tricks: Stay Active Indoors, by Dr. Mike

In case you haven't heard or even noticed, kids now a days are not getting enough exercise and in the winter months it's even harder. They're stuck indoors with less opportunity to burn those extra calories. They're usually stuck on a couch either watching brain numbing television or working out their thumbs playing video games.



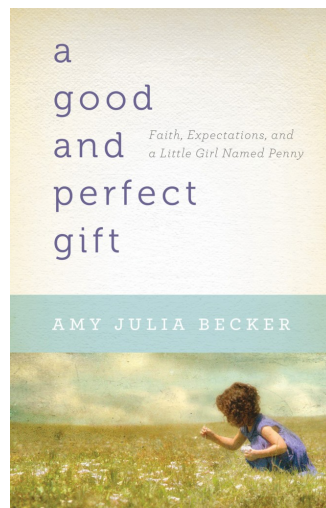
We as parents need to step up and get our kids moving. According to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, up to 33 percent of children are obese due to poor diet and lack of exercise. Kids should be involved in some type of physical activity 3-5 times a day for at least 30 minutes.

It's definitely a lot easier in the summer months to get our kids outside to the park or to play sports, but what do we do when it starts getting dark earlier, colder outside, or when bad weather hits? I can suggest some ideas that can work indoors to get your kids moving. My recommendations actually do Wii sports, Wii fit and the Kinect from X-box. These games are sure get your kids attention while combining the same stimulation as a video game with the added benefit of movement. Also, these games are active social, and believe it or not, will make your kids sweat.

Other ideas: jump rope, hula hoop, hop scotch, nerf basketball, and yoga.

Spotlight On The Author: Amy Julia Becker, *A Good and Perfect Gift*

As an author & mother, what gave you the strength to share your personal story?: When Penny was diagnosed with Down syndrome a few hours after birth, I didn't know how to respond. Over the course of the next year, I think I experienced every possible emotion--sadness, joy, anger, acceptance, guilt, peace--and I wrote in my journal about each of those emotions. Over time, I wrote about these feelings on a private blog, and I learned that they were helpful to other parents, not only parents of children with disabilities, but parents in general who were struggling to handle their hopes and dreams and fears for their children. The response of other parents to my writing gave me great encouragement that if I wrote honestly about our experience--the beautiful and ugly parts--it would be a blessing to many.



What were you hoping to accomplish when writing this book? How were you hoping to touch the reader?: My favorite books are ones that tell a good story and also make me think. I hope that *A Good and Perfect Gift* tells a good story--a story of a young couple

who thought they knew what to expect when having their first child and instead had to go through a process in order to receive her as the child they had always wanted, a story of doubt and struggle and gratitude and love. I also hope *A Good and Perfect Gift* makes people think--about what makes a "good" life, about the nature of perfection, and about the idea that every human being is a gift to the rest of us.

What were you hoping parents who also have a child with down syndrome would take away from your book? Someone who is not directly affected by down syndrome?: I think most people assume that I wrote *A Good and Perfect Gift* for other parents of children with Down syndrome. On one level, that's true. I hope that other parents can use our story as a way to reflect upon their own, and I've heard from many parents that they found reassurance and encouragement from reading about our family. But I actually wrote it for people who don't know much about Down syndrome or disabilities. I wasn't trying to teach them about chromosomes, I was trying to pass along the various ways that having a daughter with Down syndrome has changed the way I view the world. Having Penny in my life has taught me to see every human being as a gift, as a person who has something to offer to me, and who has something to receive from me. I would love for readers to walk away from this book with the assumption that people with physical and intellectual disabilities have just as much to contribute to our society as anyone else.